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₹ 5K-CR PROJECT TO BOLSTER R&D IN PHARMA, MED-TECH SECTORS

The Union health ministry will soon roll out a five-year policy to boost R&D in pharma and medtech sectors. Top government sources said that around ₹5,000 crore will be spent over five years from FY24 to FY28 for the mega project. As part of this policy, the govt will establish seven centres of excellence in Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Kolkata (West Bengal), Raebareli (Uttar Pradesh), Hajipur (Bihar), Guwahati (Assam), Hyderabad (Telangana), and Mohali (Punjab), sources said | P10

PM Narendra Modi gestures after addressing the nation on the 77th Independence Day from the ramparts of Red Fort in New Delhi on Tuesday, as helicopters shower petals on the gathering. This was his 10th consecutive I-Day address from Red Fort | P11

PM sets tone for 2024 poll

Seeks to expand OBC outreach, strengthen bond with people in I-Day speech

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR
@ New Delhi

SETTING the tone for his re-election bid in 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday sought to expand his OBC outreach, solidify his bond with the masses by addressing them as family members, and called for a war against the 'three evils' of corruption, appeasement and dynastic politics.

In his 10th consecutive Independence Day speech at Red Fort, he mentioned *parivarjan* (family members) at least 50 times. In the past, he had addressed the citizens as 'my beloved brothers and sisters' or 'my dear fellow citizens'.

Seeking to expand his OBC vote bank, Modi announced the Vishwakarma Yojana, with an outlay of ₹13,000-15,000 crore, to boost the livelihood opportunities for people engaged in traditional skills like carpenters, masons and goldsmiths. The scheme, benefiting the OBCs, will be launched on Vishwakarma Jayanti on September 17.

He also said he aims to create two crore *lakhpati didis* (millionaire sisters) by skilling them to become small entrepreneurs. Women would also be provided drone operation training for agricultural purposes.

Regarding the situation in riot-torn Manipur, the PM said peace is gradually returning to the region."India stands with Manipur, and both the Central and the state governments are collaboratively working to uphold peace," he said, adding the entire nation shares its pain.

Expressing gratitude to the nation for voting a stable government to power at the Centre in 2014, following three decades of uncertainty, instability and political compulsions, the PM said, "You placed your trust in me. I endeavoured to live up to that trust. I pledged to reform, perform, and transform, and I have diligently served the nation with pride."

"On the next August 15, I will speak to you from Red Fort with more self-confidence about the country's achievements, the successes of your capabilities and the progress made in fulfilling your resolutions," he said amid applause from the crowd.

In a veiled reference to the Opposition, Modi emphasised that the collective eradication of corruption, nepotism and political appeasement was imperative for the country's progress. "It is our shared responsibility to foster probity, transparency, and impartiality to elevate India into a developed nation."

Criticising the Opposition unity, the PM remarked, "These individuals absconded after misappropriating your hard-earned money... I am committed to advancing the fight against corruption."

No HC relief in LCA tech theft case

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

THE Karnataka High Court has refused to quash the criminal proceedings against a 27-year-old aerospace engineering graduate who allegedly sold sensitive military technology of Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas that was planned to be used on Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), on the Dark Web.

AMCA, a more advanced fighter than Tejas, is under design and development with Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and Aircraft Research & Design Centre (ARDC) of HAL.

The data leaked to the Dark Web pertained to defence secrets with regard to installation of characteristics of moderate to high angles of attack concerning the aircraft, its design, fabrication, measurement and dynamic derivatives, all for enriching himself, the court noted.

Such usage of the Dark Web for defence secrets to be uploaded has a devastating effect on national security and would have destabilised the defence of the nation. The accused, Siva Rama Krishna Chennuboina, a native of Andhra Pradesh and residing at Yelahanka in Bengaluru, was a BTech graduate from Manipal University and interned at the Department of Aerospace Engineering at Indian Institute of Science (IISc). P5

CJI: 27 more courtrooms will come up in SC

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

STRESSING the need to modernise the judicial infrastructure to make the Supreme Court more accessible and inclusive, Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Tuesday announced the expansion of its infrastructure in two phases.

He also recalled instances of arbitrary arrests and demolition of properties of the accused, saying irrespective of the outcome of a case, the strength of the system is to grant justice. "That sense of confidence in an individual that an arbitrary arrest, a threatened demolition, if their properties are attached unlawfully, must find solace and a voice in judges of the Supreme Court," he said. P5

EXPRESS READ

K'taka will be made No 1 manufacturing hub: CM

Bengaluru: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday said his government plans to double the state's industrial growth rate and transform it into No 1 manufacturing hub in Asia | P4

Gangrape: Spl police team to trace accused

Koppal: The Koppal police, who are investigating the gangrape of a 46-year-old woman, are looking at setting up a special team to nab the accused, who are said to be absconding | P5

Sulabh International founder passes away

New Delhi: Sulabh International founder and social activist Bindeshwar Pathak, a pioneer in building public toilets, died at AIIMS here due to a cardiac arrest on Tuesday, according to a close aide. He was 80 | P7

Karnataka to release 10 tmcft of water to TN

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

DEPUTY CM DK Shivakumar on Tuesday said the Karnataka government is committed to releasing 10 tmcft of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu, which has approached the Supreme Court for the same. In the same breath, Shivakumar appealed to the Tamil Nadu government to cooperate with Karnataka in the implementation of the Mekedatu project as it would be beneficial to it too.

Addressing reporters after taking part in the Independence Day celebrations at the KPCC office, Shivakumar, who is also Minister for Water Resources, said Karnataka had released water to Tamil Nadu based on its availability while also providing water to farmers for irrigation.

Reiterating that there should be no confrontation over sharing of Cauvery water, he said water will be released based on the inflow into the reservoirs in Karnataka. "However, we are committed to releasing 10 tmcft of water to Tamil Nadu now," he added.

Expressing displeasure over Tamil Nadu not supporting the Mekedatu project, the DyCM said 400 tmcft of water flowed into the sea last year. The neighbouring state should cooperate in implementing the Mekedatu project as it would help Karnataka release water whenever there is rain deficit. "It is in times such as these that the project helps us to release water to Tamil Nadu. The Mekedatu project benefits Tamil Nadu also. Hence, it should support the reservoir project," Shivakumar said.

K'taka mulls own airports authority

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Vijayapura

MINISTER for Infrastructure Development MB Patil on Tuesday asserted that the state government is mulling over the possibilities of establishing its own airports authority on the lines of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) to operate airports being built in the state by it.

Addressing reporters here, he said handing over the airports to AAI for operation fetched no profit to the state.

CONTINUED ON: P4

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